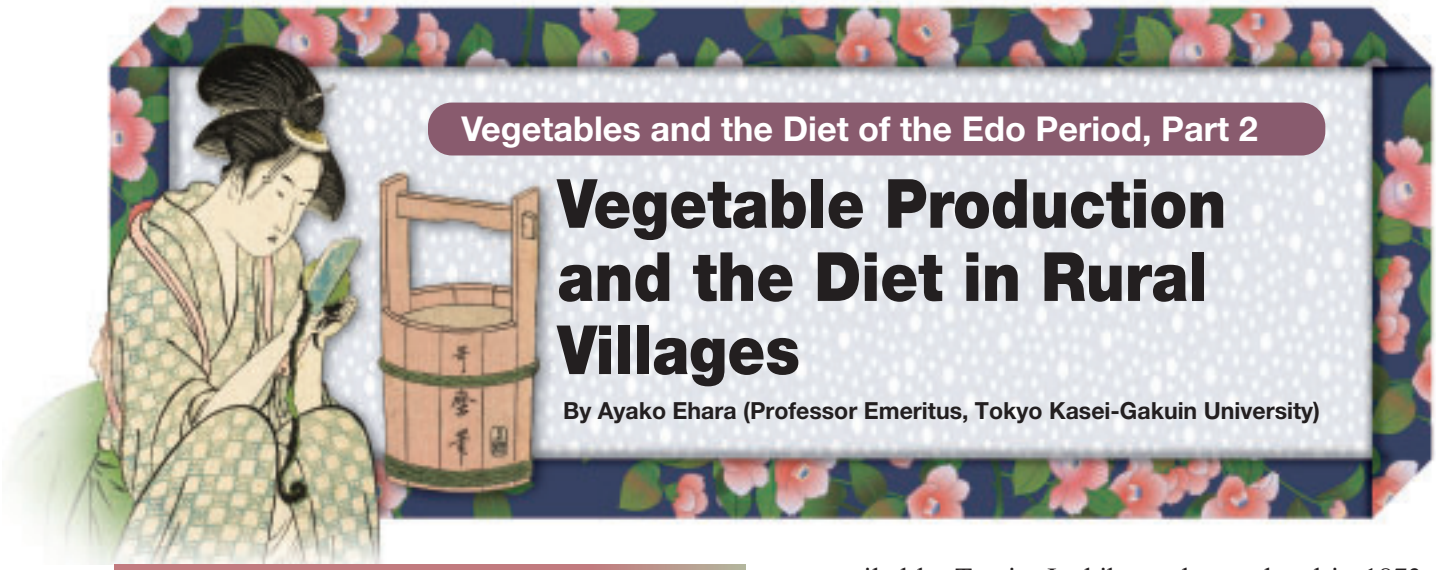

Vegetables and the Diet of the Edo Period, Part 2

Vegetable Production and the Diet in Rural Villages

By Ayako Ehara (Professor Emeritus, Tokyo Kasei-Gakuin University)

Introduction

During the Edo period (1603–1868), the number of villages in Japan remained fairly constant with roughly 63,200 villages in 1697 and 63,500 140 years later in 1834. According to one source, the land value of an average 18th and 19th century village, with a population of around 400, was as much as 400 to 500 *koku*[1], though the scale and character of each village varied with some showing marked individuality.

In one book, the author raised objections to the general belief that farmers accounted for nearly eighty percent of the Japanese population before and during the Edo period. Taking this into consideration, a general or brief discussion of the diet in rural mountain villages is not appropriate. Part Two of this article focuses on the Edo-period diet, and specifically vegetables of mountain villages in the Hida province (present-day northern Gifu prefecture), which seemingly had very little contact with the outside world due to the steep and rugged mountains surrounding them. As with Part One, the use of "vegetables" in this article refers to all foods of plant origin, including beans and potatoes, as well as those foods processed from vegetables.

1.*Koku* refers to a quantity of rice used to measure the production or economic capacity of land or a region during the Edo period. One *koku* is equivalent to 180.39 liters, and was considered enough to feed one person for a year.

1.The Lifestyle of Hida Villagers

Hida province was surrounded by Mino (present-day southern Gifu prefecture), Shinano (present-day Nagano prefecture), Ecchu (present-day Toyama prefecture), Kaga (present-day Ishikawa prefecture) and Echizen (present-day Fukui prefecture) provinces, but isolated due to the mountains that hampered access to and from other provinces. *Hidago Fudoki*, compiled by Tomita Iyahiko and completed in 1873, describes the geography and culture of Hida province. It contains records from 415 villages in three Hida counties, including information on land value, number of households, population and products, which give us an idea of the lifestyle of these villagers at the end of the Edo period. The first printed edition of *Hidago Fudoki* was published in 1930 (by Yuzankaku, Inc.), and was based primarily on the twenty-volume manuscript held by the National Archives of Japan. This edition exhibits some minor discrepancies from the manuscript, but is generally identical. This article refers primarily to the printed edition, with the manuscript used as supplementary reference.

In 1846, Hida province had a population of 86,000 and its land was valued at 56,000 *koku*. The value of the land was only about one tenth that of the neighboring five provinces. Hida produced only 0.65 *koku* of rice per person, while neighboring Kaga and Ecchu produced two *koku* and Shinano and Echigo

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produced one *koku* per person. According to an 1870 survey that included necessities that Hida purchased from other provinces, foods accounted for seventy percent of the total of such expenditures. The product purchased in the largest quantity was rice, followed by other minor grains. Other food items purchased included salt, tea, salted and dried fish, candies and confectioneries, sugar and noodles. With its extreme location and conditions, Hida was not suited to the cultivation of rice. This made the purchase of foods from other provinces a vital necessity.

Hida province was not without its own products, however. It was the source of thread, copper, silver and other mountain materials including paper mulberry and unfinished wooden bowls. The amount received for these products exceeded the amount spent on the necessities purchased from other provinces. Therefore, we can assume that despite the fact that Hida was not self-sufficient in terms of food production, it did earn enough to purchase what it needed. Most Hida villagers were occupied with not only farming, but also labor such as logging needed to make a living. The next section takes a look at some unique lifestyles described in *Hidago Fudoki*, and considers the relationship between the villagers' diet and vegetables.

2.Villages with Very Little or No Rice Production

Some villages around Takayama (a domain of the Tokugawa Shogunate consisting of three villages: Ichino-machi, Nino-machi and Sanno-machi) along the Miya and Mashita rivers had small, flat areas suited to rice cultivation. Many other villages located between the mountains, where the land was steep and rugged, grew Japanese barnyard millet. However, there were still other villages where the cultivation of even this minor grain was not possible. The remainder of this article focuses on eight distinct villages, and looks into the lifestyle and diet of their people based on information from *Hidago Fudoki*. The locations of the eight villages are shown on the map, and relevant data for these villages are summarized in the table in ascending order of the number of households. The table shows that, with the exception of Sanfukuji and Furukawa-machikata villages, very little or no rice was produced.

First let us look at how people lived in villages with little or no rice cultivation. Hirayu village (1) was a tiny community with only seventy residents in fourteen households. Each household operated an inn to accommodate guests visiting the hot springs. Though no rice cultivation is mentioned, the village did produce a significant amount of Japanese barnyard millet and buckwheat. Other vegetables grown include wasabi (Japanese horseradish; *Cryptotaenia japonica*), soybeans, and azuki beans (*Vigna angularis*). Due to the extremely cold climate, mulberry and hemp were not grown in this village. The villagers cultivated cowpeas and potatoes in fields, collected Japanese spikenard (*Aralia cordata*), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), Japanese flowering fern

Buko Sanbutsu-shi, Iwasaki Tsunemasa, 1824 (property of Tokyo Kasei-Gakuin University Library), photographed by the author

Hida Villages: Scale and Food Production Villages with little rice production (except Takayama-machi villages) Note:"0" indicates no mention of rice production in reference text.

	Village	House holds	Population	Land value (*koku*)	Rice production (*koku*)	Rice per household (*koku*)	Millet production (*koku*)	Millet per household (*koku*)	Vegetable products	Other products
1	Hirayu	14	70	19.6	0	0	38	2.7	Bracken fern, Japanese flowering fern, bamboo shoots, *wasabi*, soybeans, *azuki* beans	Miso, soy sauce, oil, confectioneries and other products to sell to hot spring visitors
2	Hatogaya	18	100	114.2	51	2.8	43	2.4	Bracken fern starch, *daikon* radish, turnips, carrots, burdock root, eggplant, green onions, taro, giant elephant ear (*Colocasia gigantea*), soybeans, *azuki* beans, peas, cowpeas, cucumbers, squash	Whitespotted char, dojo loach
3	Churo	35	217	174.4	110	3.1	80.4	2.3	Japanese apricots, persimmons, ginkgo nuts, chestnuts, soybeans	Pheasant, copper pheasant, minnows
4	Ikegahora	36	186	13.4	0	0	23	0.6	Soybeans, bracken fern, Japanese flowering fern, Japanese spikenard, plantain lily, *yamagobo* (root of *Cirsium dipsacolepis*), bracken fern starch	Boar, copper pheasant, pheasant, whitespotted char
5	Sanfukuji	108	510	737.2	830	7.7	112	1.1	Sesame seeds, egoma perilla, tea, soybeans, *azuki* beans, rapeseed, water melons, lilies, Japanese apricots, Japanese plums, pears, chestnuts, persimmons, walnuts	Ducks, small birds, trout, minnows, Japanese dace, dojo loach, pond snails, freshwater pearl mussels (*Margaritifera laevis*)
6	Makigahora	109	570	319.1	0	0	0	0	Bamboo shoots, mushrooms, vegetables, *egoma* perilla	None mentioned
7	Furukawa machikata	775	3550	1218.5	1008	1.3	74	0.1	Furukawa pears, water shield, mandarin oranges, shredded *kombu* kelp, ginkgo nuts	Japanese dace, eel, Crucian carp, ajime loach (*Niwaella delicata*), sake
8	Takayama machi	1672	11180	502	54	0.03	0	0	Soybeans, *azuki* beans, *daikon* radish, turnips, eggplant, squash, cucumbers, winter green onions, peas, etc.	Sake, soy sauce, *miso*, oil

A village of inns At Hirayu village, all fourteen households earned their living by operating inns and selling rice, *miso* and confectionery to visitors to the local hot springs.

(*Osmunda japonica*), giant butterbur (*Petasites japonicus*), water dropwort (*Oenanthe javanica*) and bamboo shoots from the mountains, and caught whitespotted char (*Salvelinus leucomaenis*), pigeons and other small birds to supplement their diet. As the number of visitors to the hot springs grew annually, the villagers purchased rice, wheat, *miso* (fermented soybean paste), soy sauce, oil, confectioneries and candles that they sold to guests for a profit. As a result, *Hidago Fudoki* notes that the land value of this village nearly doubled over time. Clearly, the primary industry in this village was commerce.

Hatogaya village (2) in the Shirakawa-go district cultivated little rice, but did produce powdered kudzu root and a number of vegetables including *daikon* radish, turnips, carrots, burdock root, eggplant, green onions, squash, potatoes and beans. A collection of records compiled through interviews with locals during the Taisho era (1912–1926) shows that the standard meal in the area consisted of Japanese barnyard millet as the staple, with miso soup, a simmered dish of cowpeas and wild plants and/or grilled eggplant, and pickled vegetables. We assume that everyday meals near the end of the Edo period were very similar. However, on special occasions, many dishes were prepared, including steamed rice, *miso* soup with tofu, a vegetable and tofu dish, a small dish of simmered cowpeas, a potato, carrot and grilled tofu dish, steamed and dried chestnuts, roasted beans, and a dessert of *kaya* (*Torreya nucifera*) nuts. All of the ingredients used in these dishes came from vegetables. Many vegetables such as Japanese flowering fern, *yomena* (*Kalimeris yomena*), daikon radish and *daikon* leaves were dried and preserved. Dried *yomena* was boiled and soaked in water for a day to reduce acridity, and then simmered in soup flavored with soy sauce or dressed with ground egoma perilla (*Perilla frutescens var. frutescens*) seeds. Squash and *daikon* radish were stored on the second or third floors of houses to prevent them from freezing. Hatogaya villagers made their living growing paper mulberry, mulberry, hemp and tobacco, and cultivating silkworm cocoons for producing silk fabrics.

A pulley system over the river between Hatogaya and Hagimachi villages Similar systems were used at several locations throughout the Shirakawa-go district.

Ikegahora village (4) was located between mountains in the Atano-go district. Though no rice cultivation is indicated, a significant amount of Japanese barnyard millet was produced. In addition to vegetables such as buckwheat, soybeans, *azuki* beans, and meat from horses, wild boar, copper pheasant, Japanese pheas-

Production of bracken fern starch At Ikegahora village and other villages deep in the mountains, women stayed in mountain huts during agricultural off-seasons to collect and process bracken fern rhizomes to produce starch. Villagers earned a living by selling the starch to merchants in Takayama and Toyama.

ant and whitespotted char, the village also produced silkworm cocoons. A particularly noteworthy product of this village was starch manufactured from bracken fern rhizomes. This was a precious product not only in Ikegahora, but also in other villages in the Atano-go district and valley regions where rice cultivation was not possible. For thirty to forty days in the spring and fall, village women stayed in huts deep in the mountains where they dug bracken fern rhizomes and made the precious starch.

This starch was made by crushing the bracken fern rhizomes, repeatedly immersing the crushed rhizome in water and finally drying it into a powdered starch. This ancient method of production originated in the Jomon period (14,000 BCE–400 BCE), and was developed to eliminate acids and poisons from nuts. The work was strenuous and demanding, but well worth the effort. A coarse version of the starch was used by the villagers, while a finer version was sold in other provinces. The starch was often mixed with buckwheat flour or wheat scrap and a dough made by kneading in a small amount of water. The dough was then baked, cut and served with roasted soybean flour or salt. Bracken fern starch was in greater demand, however, as a material used in making the glue for Japanese umbrellas and lanterns, and sold at quite a high price, making this starch an important source of income for Ikegahora village. Men used bracken fern stems to make rope, which was sold to traders from Ecchu for cash needed to purchase rice or salt. While the women of Ikegahora were primarily involved in the production of the bracken fern starch, the men earned wages logging for their lord.

Night watch in mountain fields In mountain fields, night watchmen protected their crops through the night using various alarm instruments to frighten off wild boars and other animals.

Makigahora village (6) was a rather large Hida community with 570 residents in 109 households. The printed edition of *Hidago Fudoki* does not list the products of this village. In addition, the manuscript does not mention any cultivation of rice or Japanese barnyard millet. The majority of the land consisted of mulberry fields and mountain forests. The products indicated in the manuscript include silkworm cocoons, paper mulberry, rapeseed, firewood, cotton cloth and other fabrics, as well as vegetables such as bamboo shoots and mushrooms. We assume that villages made their living weaving cotton cloth and other fabrics made primarily of materials collected in the mountains, which were then transported to Takayama for sale. *Hidago Fudoki* does note that a particular variety of bamboo shoot, known as *sasanoko*, collected deep in the mountains near the village in early May, was sold to Takayama. The shoots were used in soups and simmered dishes, and even salted shoots were extremely popular for a flavor superior to that of other varieties of bamboo shoot.

***Sasanoko* (*Sasa kurilensis*) bamboo shoots** At Makinohora village, villagers collected bamboo shoots sprouting deep in the mountains in early May and sold them in Takayama. The shoots were used for soups and preserved with salt.

3.Living in a Shogunate Domain— Takayama and Neighboring Villages

Takayama-machi villages (8), hereafter referred to collectively as "Takayama," were surrounded by mountains on all sides and came under the direct rule of the shogunate with the establishment of the Takayama magistrate's office during the Genroku period (1688–1703). Takayama was the largest consumer area in the Hida province. Home to many government officials, traders and manufacturers, Takayama depended on neighboring villages for most of its necessities. Takayama also served as a hub for product distribution. Among the products of Takayama not mentioned in the printed edition of *Hidago Fudoki*, various types of thread were the most common. Other products include lacquered trays with legs for serving individuals, trays for soup bowls, trays for general use; chopsticks, toothpicks and traditional Japanese *geta* footwear made of Japanese yew (*Taxus cuspidate*); and partitioned lunch boxes, tubs, umbrellas and paper products. Foods produced in Takayama included sake, *miso*, soy sauce, rapeseed oil (used primarily as lamp oil rather than for cooking), perilla oil and vegetables such as *daikon* radish, turnips, eggplant, squash and winter green onions. All of these products were consumed in Takayama and also sold to other provinces. However, Takayama did not produce nearly enough rice for its 11,180 residents in 1,672 households, so it depended heavily on neighboring villages for its rice supply.

The life of a wood craftsman Japanese horse chestnut (*Aesculus turbinate*) and Japanese beech (*Fagus crenata Blume*) were logged and bowls carved from blocks of the wood. The bare, unfinished bowls were sold to suppliers in Takayama, Furukawa and other villages.

Miya-gawa Na-arai no Zu Every October women gathered at the Miya river to wash daikon radish and turnips. It was said that the more women that participated from a single household, the more prosperous that household would be (this picture is not included in the manuscript kept by the National Archives of Japan).

River ferry In the upper reaches of the Miya river, dugout boats were used to transport people from one village to another.

Sanfukuji village (5) produced a great amount of rice, the excess of which was presumably sold to Takayama. Little girls picked the rapeseed that sprouted in the early spring and was then sold to Takayama. Every October, the women of Takayama, including young girls, nannies and employees gathered at the Miya river running through Takayama to clean *daikon* radish and turnips. According to local tradition, the more women that participated from an individual household, the more prosperous that household would be. As the illustration titled *Miya-gawa Na-arai no Zu* shows, this was a festive event for the women. After cleaning, the vegetables would have been used to make pickles.

Pickles made from a variety of vegetables, and in a variety of ways, served as essential side dishes to daily meals. One author who examined Hida life found that not only were the traditional salted pickles produced, but also a type of pickle unique to the area. Cleaned vegetables such as turnips were soaked in warm water and then stored in tubs under stone weights. Salt was not added, resulting in pickles with a sour flavor caused by lactic acid fermentation. During the winter, these pickles froze in their tubs. The frozen pickles were boiled and used in soups as well as dressed dishes. *Daikon* radish and turnip leaves pickled in the usual manner using salt were often placed on a leaf of Japanese whitebark magnolia (*Magnolia obovata*) and grilled with *miso*. The author also noted that potatoes were often cooked in the salty liquid produced as a result of salt pickling.

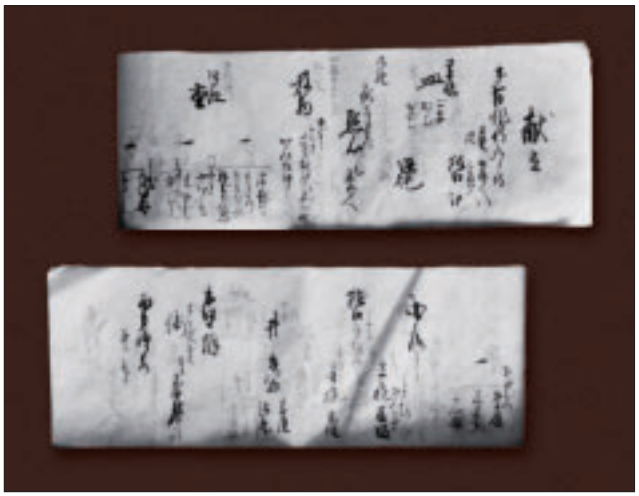
Furukawa-machikata village (7) was another domain under the direct rule of the Tokugawa shogunate and had the second largest population in the province after Takayama. One of its products, the Furukawa pear, was very popular and was sold to Takayama. Merchants from Ecchu, Takayama and Furukawa gathered at the annual markets held in Furukawa-

machikata on December 22 and 27 of the lunar calendar to trade such items as mandarin oranges, shredded *kombu* kelp, varieties of fish roe and fish. This village was also the second largest producer of *sake*(Japanese rice wine), after Takayama.

From the information above, it seems that the people of several Hida villages relied on minor grains as the staple, with simmered vegetables and pickled vegetables as side dishes to their everyday meals. In preparation for their snowbound winters, wild vegetables such as Japanese flowering fern, bracken fern, *yomena* and wisteria flowers were boiled, dried and preserved. I have helped locals with the collection and processing of Japanese flowering fern. Processing calls for boiling followed by repeated rubbing and then drying for several days. The dried fern, which is soaked for several hours and then simmered, is very delicious. In areas not suited to food production, the people managed to earn money to purchase their food by such means as logging, woodworking and the production of threads and fabrics.

4.Ceremonial Meals Differed Greatly from Everyday Meals

Due to its flat fields along the Mashita river, Churo village (3), located to the south of Takayama, produced a relatively large amount of rice for the Hida province. The number of households—around thirty five—remained about the same from 1800 to the beginning of the Meiji era (1868–1912). Here we will look at records for ceremonial meals of the Omae family, the hereditary head of Churo village. Records from Omae family weddings exist for 1842, 1843, 1853 and 1847. There is very little difference in the style of the ceremonial meals for these four weddings. Briefly, the banquet began with toasts. A new side dish was served with each toast. Next, a formal dinner of rice, soup, a dressed dish, dishes served in a variety of bowls and cups, and a roasted dish was served. Even fifty years later, the menu of such a meal had hardly changed. The formal dinner was followed by a drinking party. Soup and a wide variety of side dishes, each named for the type of dish or bowl it was served in, were served with sake.



Menu for an 1856 Buddhist memorial ceremony in Churo village The menu consisted entirely of dishes made from plants, such as udon noodles, mushrooms, ginkgo nuts, sesame seeds, lily, *yuba* (tofu skin) and Japanese yams. Many side dishes served with sake mark the significant difference from everyday meals.

The main course for wedding banquets and other ceremonial meals given to celebrate special events was some type of seafood. It is surprising that so many varieties of seafood were served given the great distance of the villages from the ocean. In addition to more than ten varieties of marine fish and shellfish, including sea bream, Japanese Spanish mackerel, Japanese sea bass, cod, mackerel, sardines, squid and shrimp, processed seafood such as herring roe, dried juvenile Japanese anchovies, dried sea cucumber, steamed shellfish, dried squid, grilled fish paste and fish past dumplings were often used. The local abundance of sandpipers and other wild birds, as well as their eggs, meant that dishes made from these ingredients were also common at celebratory meals.

Unlike everyday meals, vegetables were primarily used to garnish seafood dishes. For example, *daikon* radish was used in a dressed dish of dried juvenile Japanese anchovies, *kombu* kelp green onions were used in a cod soup, burdock and grilled tofu were used in a fish paste dish, knotted *kombu* kelp was used in a clear shrimp soup, and carrots, green onions and burdock were used in a dish made of fresh and dried squid. Other vegetables used included Japanese yams, taro, lilies, ginger, lotus root, water dropwort, cloud ear mushrooms and chestnuts. Burdock was frequently used to garnish a variety of dishes.

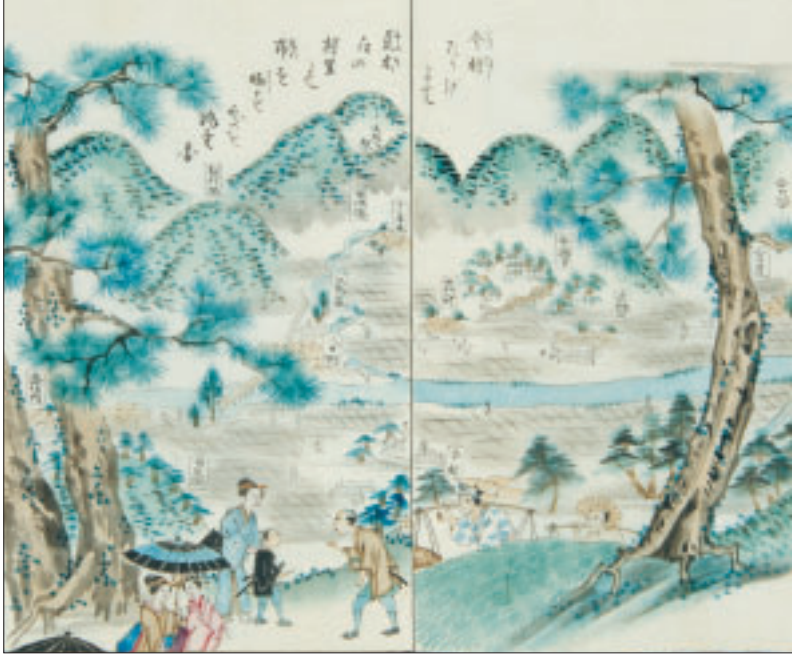
In contrast, dishes and soups made only of plant ingredients were served in the formal dinner style for funerals and other Buddhist ceremonies. At a Buddhist memorial service held in 1822 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the death of a family patriarch, *udon* noodles were served with a relish of sesame, red pepper, pickled plums, *daikon* radish and dried mandarin orange peel. Rice was then served with a soup of roasted leaves and shiitake mushrooms, followed by sake and side dishes. *Miso* soup with potatoes and tofu was served with the sake. The guests' shallow square trays each held a roasted potato, *shiso* (*Perilla frutescens*) seeds, a pear, simmered tofu and mushrooms. Guests were also served a deep bowl of deep-fried foods, green leaves and *daikon* radish. Sushi rolls, grilled tofu topped with a mixture

of *miso* and fresh ground *sansho* (Japanese pepper, *Zanthoxylum piperitum*) leaves, other tofu dishes, simmered vegetables and deep-fried foods were also served. Though all of the ingredients actually were, or came from, plants, the great variety of dishes marked a clear distinction from everyday meals. Rice, sake, soybeans and flour were purchased for Buddhist ceremonies. Soybeans were used to make tofu and flour to make *udon* noodles. *Yuba* (tofu skin), shiitake mushrooms, *kombu* kelp, *nori* seaweed, cloud ear mushrooms, chestnuts and *matsutake* mushrooms were also used.

The Omaes served food and sake to more than 150 guests before and after funerals, and a full meal to roughly fifty guests on the following day. The family invited sixty to seventy people to their wedding banquets. Given the size of the village, the scale of these events was quite large. It would be reasonable to assume that seafood served at wedding banquets was transported to Churo village primarily from Toyama in Ecchu province, via Takayama. The Omaes' records indicate that they had the financial means to purchase a great amount of food, and that transportation routes to mountain villages were well established. Adult yellowtail was considered an essential part of New Year's celebrations. It was transported from Ecchu to Takayama, with most then transported from Takayama to Shinano by Shinano merchants. The fish was known as Hida yellowtail and used in New Year's dishes in Shinano province. This shows us that Hida province had strong ties to other provinces despite the rugged mountains separating them.

Conclusion

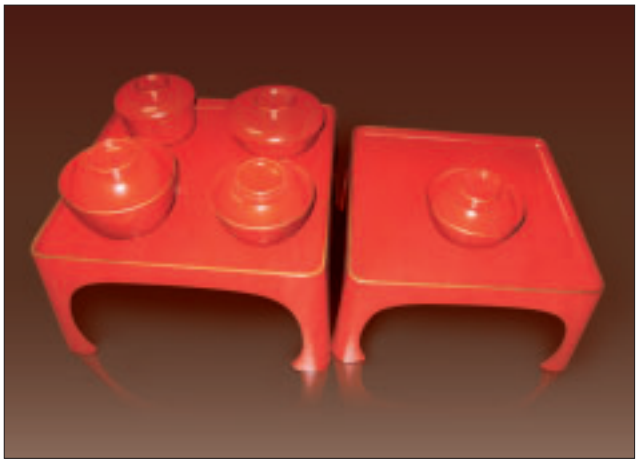
Thus far, we have examined the differences between vegetables and other foods in terms of their use by comparing everyday meals with ceremonial meals in the Hida province. Now let us take a quick look at some other regions. The Furuhashi family, which the author has been researching for many years, was the leading family of Inahashi village (present-day Inabu town, Toyota city) in the Mikawa province (present-day eastern Aichi prefecture) near Hida province. Inahashi was an inland village along the route connecting Shinano and Okazaki (present-day Okazaki city, Aichi prefecture) provinces. Menus from as many as twenty wedding banquets held during the late Edo period (after 1807) are still in existence. As with the Omae family, the menus feature an abundance of seafood, roughly forty percent of all fish and shellfish served at the banquets. Sea bream was



Imamura pass This pass was the shortest route linking Takayama and Ecchu. This route was also used to transport adult yellowtail, an important item in ceremonial meals celebrating the New Year. The pass was also known for its rapeseed, *deutzia* and peach blossoms.

the most common seafood, followed by shrimp, mullet, Japanese sea bass, flounder, adult yellowtail and squid. Processed seafood such as dried juvenile Japanese anchovies, seasoned dried squid rolls, steamed fish loaf and minced fish balls were also served. The menu from an 1835 wedding banquet shows that though vegetables were used primarily to garnish seafood dishes, they were indispensable. Dishes included one water dropwort, *daikon* radish, carrots, Japanese stargazer (*Uranoscopus japonicus Houttuyn*), mullet, black cliff fungus and red algae, a soup of gingko nut cake, *daikon* radish and cockle, a dish of cloud ear mushrooms, taro, grilled fish paste, konjac, carrots and tofu wrapped with straw and simmered, small cups of Japanese spikenard dressed with *miso*, and a dish of yellowtail, bracken fern and burdock. Other vegetables found in the menu include green onions, leafy green vegetables, giant butterbur, *yomena*, chestnuts, lilies and bamboo shoots. Like the Omae family, the Furuhashi family served ceremonial meals in the formal dinner style with seafood as the main ingredients. They spent a great deal of money and went out of their way to prepare feasts in celebration of weddings, the major events in their family.

Noka Nenchu Gyoji (by Ohira Yohyoe, 1839) is a record of village events, lifestyle and the practice of offering sake and food to tenant farmers kept by the leading family of a village in the Nagaoka domain (present-day Niigata prefecture). The headman offered vegetable dishes and sake to tenant farmers on January 2 to celebrate the New Year. January 7 was a holiday and the people celebrated with a breakfast of porridge with daikon radish, burdock, carrots, kombu kelp, dried squid, taro and konjac. January 11 was also a holiday that villagers celebrated with a



Ceremonial trays and tableware
Trays and tableware used for the fiftieth and one-hundredth Shinto memorial ceremonies of the Furuhashi family in the province of Mikawa (do not predate the Edo period).

breakfast of *zoni* (a thick soup of *mochi* rice cakes and vegetables simmered in broth). On this day, the heads of households gathered at the village headman's house to renew their family registries and receive instructions and guidance for the year. Warehouse and boat owners also offered sake to the villagers on this day to celebrate the opening of warehouses or beginning of boat operations for the year. In years when the regional lord was at home in his castle (not in Edo as often required by the shogunate), village headmen and their assistants were invited to the castle and entertained with *noh* plays, and served cold sake, rice with red beans and simmered vegetable dishes. On January 15, rich families gave rice or *mochi* rice cakes and money to the poor who gathered in front of their houses. After a breakfast of porridge with *azuki* beans, the heads of households paid courtesy calls to their village headman, officials, landlord and other important acquaintances. Though the people did not eat lunch, they had a celebratory meal of seasonal vegetables and grilled salted salmon or salted trout early in the evening. It was on this and the following day that friends and neighbors got together to enjoy Japanese card games, and games of chance. This record shows that although everyday meals were very frugal, special events were frequently held for the pleasure of the villagers. Vegetables were clearly very important in the daily lives of the people.

Another work, written during the Meiwa era (1764–1772) describes the management of the Yoshikawa's family business. The Yoshikawas were landlords in Aki province (present-day western Hiroshima prefecture). This work contains detailed accounts of meals served to their employees. On January 2, the family served their employees *zoni* with burdock, *daikon* radish and a small amount of fish for breakfast, rice and pickles for lunch, and rice, a dish of dressed vegetables, a dish of *daikon* radish, a dish of clams, and *miso* soup with a few clams for dinner. January 15 was a holiday (one of just two annual holidays for those employed by merchants, when they were allowed to go home). The Yoshikawas gave their employees polished rice as a New Year's gift for themselves and their families. Of the various vegetables mentioned in these records, *daikon* radish appears with particular frequency. *Daikon* radish seems to have been used throughout the year, while eggplant and cucumbers were commonly used in July, and tofu, fried thin tofu, konjac and burdock were often used in November.

Although diet varied somewhat by region, ceremonial meals were much grander in scale and ingredients than everyday meals in all regions. Seafood played a major role in wedding banquets and other celebratory meals with vegetables taking a supporting role. On the whole, however, the diet of villagers consisted primarily of vegetables. In each region, villagers took advantage of local products, and increased variety by devising processing and preservation methods suited to the environment. They not only consumed these food items themselves, but also sold them to other provinces as a means to purchase necessities not readily available to them. This shows just how flexible and resilient the villagers were. Some records also show that the villagers held a number of special events at which special meals were served, giving them variety and a chance to enjoy themselves with their neighbors.

***With the exception of *Miya-gawa Na-arai no Zu* (*Hidago Fudoki*, Yazankaku, Inc., 1930), village illustrations from *Hidago Fudoki* are the property of the National Archives of Japan.**

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